



**Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona**

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For Information Contact Public Affairs

SANDY RAYNOR

Telephone: (602) 514-7625

Cell: (602) 525-2681

MEXICAN MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR CHARGES RELATED TO THE DEATH OF AN ILLEGAL ALIEN

PHOENIX – Florentino Cano-Ilario, 21, of Puebla, Mexico, was sentenced to 46 months in prison here today, followed by five years of supervised release, by U.S. District Judge Roger G. Strand. The defendant had pleaded guilty on December 20, 2004 to a felony charge of Bringing Aliens to the United States Resulting in Death, in violation of Title 8 U.S. Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(i) and (a)(1)(B)(iv).

On June 11, 2004, Cano-Ilario and twelve other illegal aliens left from Altar, Mexico to travel to the U.S. Cano-Ilario had previously been to the U.S. and served as the guide for the group. As such, he expected to receive money from each of the aliens once they obtained work in the U.S. The group crossed the border on foot in the desert near Sasabe, Ariz. and continued to follow Cano-Ilario over the next several days. During the trip, the aliens ran out of the two gallons of water they each had and many in the group drank their own urine to quench their thirst. Leopoldo Mendez-Murrieta, a 21-year-old factory worker, became delirious from dehydration and died from hyperthermia as a result of his exposure in the desert. A rescue team from Border Patrol found the group of illegal aliens and the body of Mendez-Murrieta on June 16, 2004 in the desert outside Arizona City, Ariz. The remaining aliens received medical treatment and all survived.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the U.S. Border Patrol, Casa Grande Station. The prosecution was handled by Gary M. Restaino, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

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